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MEMORANDUM FOR: [REDACTED]
Chief, Requirements and Evaluation Staff

SUBJECT : Report on Imagery Requirements Handling

REFERENCE : 5 September 1979 Draft Report

I appreciate your sending me a copy of the survey report in draft for comment. In general it seems to me that the survey supports the present method of operating that we jointly introduced. I find that gratifying.

The remaining problem that the report identifies is communications. The present method of operation has improved this situation, but there is still a need for additional work in this area. Among the things we have in mind are reinstituting the office orientations as soon as the renovation of our space is complete. Your recommendation for the publication of a handbook on OIA is also being worked on. The report also makes clear that the photo-liaison offices in the various offices could be used much more effectively by us. We are organizing our thoughts on this and plan to get them altogether for a meeting in the near future.

One problem that continues to nag and seems to defy solution is the perception by some people that we generate a totally independent research program. This just is not true. As the people most familiar with the photography available and the extent to which it can be used to answer questions, we do recommend topics that we believe are worth addressing. We will continue to do this in the future because we believe not to do so would deprive NFAC from making full utilization of a primary intelligence source. What is important and what seems to be ignored, is that we do not assign resources or put any effort against these topics until a branch chief in one of the production offices has concurred that this is a topic worth addressing. We do make exceptions to this policy when the purpose is to demonstrate new analytical techniques which will advance the state-of-the-art and will not require a significant allocation of resources. This is done very infrequently.

The comment that we set our own priorities is in conflict with all we have attempted to do. Proper prioritization is a problem, a problem however, that is not unique to OIA. I have purposely attempted to involve management in the other offices to ensure that we are working on the right topics and that we are assigning them the proper priority. The reason I insist that each of our branches send a package of Form 2s to each interested branch chief in the other offices is so that they may review the priority given their work and make appropriate recommendations when such are called for.

ADMINISTRATIVE [REDACTED]

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A final comment is that I believe that all reference to NPIC be removed from the report since they are not a subject of the survey. More specifically we found some of the OIA comments did not represent our views as clearly as we would have liked. We are therefore recommending that these comments be replaced by the following:

Page 10, last paragraph - OIA has had difficulty in obtaining research programs from other offices in order to become involved in the early planning so as to make the best utilization of our resources and provide the best support. Procedures now in their initial stages should eliminate this problem.

Page 11, second paragraph - (OIA does not need to be alerted to the availability of applicable imagery. Each OIA analyst receives all imagery collected on his targets on a daily basis and frequently requests imagery when that available is not sufficient to satisfy his needs.)

Page 12, last paragraph - OIA also observes that although it does recommend topics to be reported on, work on these projects is not undertaken without the concurrence of the branch chief in the responsible production office.

The report supports our present method of operation and we will take appropriate action in those areas where there is still need for improvement.

[REDACTED]
Noel E. Firth
Director
Imagery Analysis

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